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Letter dated 12 April 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the latest attack in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against the citizens of Israel.

This afternoon, a Palestinian suicide bomber detonated powerful explosive charges at a crowded bus stop near the bustling Jerusalem market of Mahane Yehuda. The blast occurred at an hour when the market was overflowing with people purchasing groceries in anticipation of the start of the Jewish Sabbath. At present, six people are reported killed in the attack and over 60 others are wounded. The Al Aksa Brigades, the terrorist wing of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction, claimed responsibility for the bombing.

Earlier today, a Palestinian terrorist killed an Israeli and a Palestinian, and wounded four other Israelis and three other Palestinians, in a shooting spree at the Erez crossing point at the northern end of the Gaza Strip. The gunman, who was reported to have posed as a worker at the terminal, opened fire with an assault rifle he hid under his coat, and hurled at least one fragmentation grenade at Israelis and Palestinians in the vicinity, shortly before 7 a.m. (local time). Islamic Jihad took responsibility for the attack.

This attack is the latest incident in the continuing campaign of Palestinian terrorism that has been detailed in letters dated 26 March 2002, 18 March 2002 (A/56/880-S/2002/293), 14 March 2002 (A/56/876-S/2002/280), 11 March 2002 (A/56/867-S/2002/257), 8 March 2002 (A/56/864-S/2002/252), 5 March 2002 (A/56/857-S/2002/233), 4 March 2002 (A/56/854-S/2002/222), 27 February 2002 (A/56/843-S/2002/208), 20 February 2002 (A/56/828-S/2002/185), 19 February 2002 (A/56/824-S/2002/174), 11 February 2002 (A/56/819-S/2002/164), 8 February 2002 (A/56/814-S/2002/155), 28 January 2002 (A/56/798-S/2002/126), 22 January 2002 (A/56/788-S/2002/104), 18 January 2002 (A/56/781-S/2002/86), 16 January 2002 (A/56/774-S/2002/73), 11 January 2002 (A/56/771-S/2002/47), 4 January 2002 (A/56/766-S/2002/25), 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198), 4 December 2001 (A/56/678-S/2001/1150), 30 November 2001 (A/56/670-S/2001/1141), 27 November

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2001 (A/56/663-S/2001/1121), 12 November 2001 (A/56/617-S/2001/1071), 5 November 2001 (A/56/604-S/2001/1048), 24 October 2001 (A/56/506-S/2001/1011), 19 October 2001 (A/56/492-S/2001/990), 17 October 2001 (A/56/483-S/2001/975), 8 October 2001 (A/56/450-S/2001/948), 5 October 2001 (A/56/444-S/2001/943), 3 October 2001 (A/56/438-S/2001/938), 24 September 2001 (A/56/406-S/2001/907), 20 September 2001 (A/56/386-S/2001/892), 17 September 2001 (A/56/367-S/2001/875), 7 September 2001 (A/56/346-S/2001/858), 4 September 2001 (A/56/331-S/2001/840), 30 August 2001 (A/56/325-S/2001/834), 27 August 2001 (A/56/324-S/2001/825), 13 August 2001 (A/56/294-S/2001/787), 9 August 2001 (A/56/286-S/2001/780), 8 August 2001 (A/56/280-S/2001/775), 6 August 2001 (A/56/272-S/2001/768), 27 July 2001 (A/56/225-S/2001/743), 26 July 2001 (A/56/223-S/2001/737), 17 July 2001 (A/56/201-S/2001/706), 13 July 2001 (A/56/184-S/2001/696), 3 July 2001 (A/56/138-S/2001/662), 2 July 2001 (A/56/131-S/2001/656), 21 June 2001 (A/56/119-S/2001/619), 19 June 2001 (A/56/98-S/2001/611), 18 June 2001 (A/56/97-S/2001/604), 13 June 2001 (A/56/92-S/2001/585), 11 June 2001 (A/56/91-S/2001/580), 4 June 2001 (A/56/85-S/2001/555), 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000, (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

Today's bombing comes just hours after the United States Secretary of State arrived in Israel in an attempt to assist the parties to implement a meaningful ceasefire, an initiative with which Israel has pledged to fully cooperate. In this regard, today's attack follows a familiar pattern whereby an American initiative to bring about a ceasefire is embraced by Israel but met with a surge in terrorist bombings by the Palestinians. American envoy General Anthony Zinni, whose bridging proposals have been accepted by Israel but rejected repeatedly by the Palestinian side, was similarly greeted with a spate of suicide attacks when he first arrived in the region in December.

Today's attack further underscores the necessity to implement all aspects of resolution 1402 (2002) together, including a meaningful ceasefire, bolstered by genuine steps on the part of the Palestinians to end terrorism and incitement and to cooperate with General Zinni in the implementation of the Tenet plan and the Mitchell report. In the absence of a full and faithful implementation of resolution 1402 (2002), including all the necessary steps required of both sides, we will be unable to create the proper conditions under which the parties can return to a political process as called for by the Security Council.

And yet, despite clear calls from the international community to end the terrorism and the violence, Palestinian terrorists have continued to attempt attacks on Israeli civilians, with the full support of the Palestinian leadership. The only actor in the region actually working to prevent future terrorist attacks is the Israeli

security forces, which have been instrumental in protecting civilian lives and preventing the number of casualties from rising even higher. In recent days, numerous attempted attacks have been thwarted by Israeli forces, demonstrating that Israel's counter-terrorism operations are the only factor preventing future acts of terrorism.

Israel holds the Palestinian leadership fully responsible for today's attack in the light of its documented support for terrorism, its continuing attempts to use the media to incite hatred and glorify suicide, and its total refusal even to condemn terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians. While members of the international community have condemned terrorism in the strongest terms, Chairman Arafat continues to speak of "martyrdom" from his Ramallah compound, where he is providing shelter to wanted terrorists responsible for perpetrating attacks against civilians.

Israel is exercising its right of self-defence, as any State would do in the face of a similar and unrelenting terrorist threat. This is a right recognized not only in the Charter of the United Nations but in Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), which refer to terrorism as a threat to peace and security. And while Israel exercises its right and duty to protect its citizens, it has not forgotten its obligations to protect the lives of innocent Palestinian civilians.

Israel reiterates its call on the international community to condemn Palestinian terrorism in strongest terms and to impress upon the Palestinian people and leadership that terrorism has no place in the civilized world and that the employment of such heinous tactics will not be permitted to advance the Palestinian cause.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Aaron **Jacob**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.